**Unsustainable Fiscal Deficit**

58. SHRIVI JAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present consolidated fiscal deficit of 10 per cent of the GDP is unsustainable;

(b) if so, how far Fiscal responsiblity and Budget Management Act has met its envisaged objectives of bringing down Government borrowing and raising tax revenue; and

(c) whether Government have set any time limit for raising the Below Poverty Line people to comparative level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) The combined fiscal deficit of the States and the Centre is 9.3 per cent of GDP for 200203 (BE) as compared to 10 per cent in 2001-02 (RE). Budget 200304 lays stress on fiscal consolidation for sustained growth by eliminating budgetary drags, expenditure rationalisation and revenue enhancement under a modern tax administration.

(b) It is still too early to evaluate the FRBM Act, 2003 as the monitorable indicators and the three statements mentioned in the Act would be in place after the Rules are framed.

(c) Monitorable targets for Tenth Plan and beyond, as per Tenth Plan document, aim at a reduction of BPL population by 5 percentage points by 2007 and 15 percentage points by 2012.

**Opening of Private Banks**

59. PROF M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of policy being adopted by the Central Government for opening private/foreign bank in the country;

(b) the number of private/foreign banks functioning at present in the country, bank-wise indicating the facilities being provided by these banks to the people of the country; and

(c) the details of comparison of private/foreign banks and Indian Nationalised Banks with regard to the services and facilities being provided to the customer?